

Concept Description / SI-18726

Experience Science

THE LINK

The city of Kaunas' plural architectural identity is represented by the various eras of the classical picturesque, the communist phase, and the current socio capitalist times. The proposed site, Nemuna Island, stands directly in the middle of these various dichotomous developments. Furthermore, the island serves as a threshold between the riverfront neighbourhoods of Naujamiestis and the natural topographical Aleksotac South of the Neman River. Aligned with the city's plans to create further links and developments around the site, the project capitalises on the exciting opportunity to become the actual link. By reaching out, and connecting the parts, it negotiates and strengthens their identities while drawing people of diverse backgrounds for a common purpose: to **Experience Science**. Acting as a vitalizing agent in the park, setting the project near the Western tip of the island also serves as a balancing act to the development of the Zalgiris Arena on The Eastern tip. It allows for the main park to prevail and activates the proposed spine along the links between old town, Neumuna and the planned convention center.

THE INTEGRATED ICON

The site, the program and architectural pluralism of Kaunas begs for a unique architectural language for the building. An architecture which can serve as an icon, integrate within the existing context, and become a 'good resident' in the park. **Experience Science** fulfils these requirements as it leaves an impression on the visitor with its sweeping facades, reflecting the surrounding city, landscape and sky.

INSIDE OUT

The floating galleries allow for 100% public access to the ground plan avoiding the interruption of the park as well as instilling curiosity in passersby. Placing a significant portion of the program below ground, results in a fluid series of landscaped berms with multiple visual connections between the park and the interiors, allowing even for non-paying individuals and families to **Experience Science**. Features such as the **Lookouts**, the **SkyBridge** and the **ParkEscalators**, become integrated components of the program for paying visitors that tie the external existing nature of the site to the internal program of the center.

EXPERIENCE SCIENCE, PARK AND CITY

The diversely tailored sweeping profiles of the project respond to the flexible programmatic needs and create a resulting contextual campus which preserves a vital human scale at the site. Walking through the interior of the galleries, the visitor experiences a familiar domestic space with an exciting unfamiliar display. The blending of the two, produces an architectural instrument that draws people closer to science. The Lookouts from within the floating galleries reframe familiar sceneries, allowing Kaunas exciting views to emerge as they have never been experienced before.

INTERLACED LANDSCAPE

Experience Science, activates and preserves the character of the island while also facilitating additional future development. The extended landscape design proposal further enhances connectivity to the breath-taking views of the river and the city. The intuitive pedestrian arrival to the **Welcome Plaza**, concealed vehicular access and a multitude of walking paths through the **Ecological Wilderness**, wind up the proposal's goal to create an exciting space which integrates nature science and draws visitors to interact with their novel environment.

